

God Is Calling, Will Liz Please Pick Up?

In early March of 2008, I received an e-mail from Evangelical Friends Missions regarding the need for a short-term missionary (to be a teacher of missionaries' children). When I read this e-mail, I had a physical reaction: My body almost shuddered (I am still not sure what word to describe the reaction my body had). I argued with myself about it saying it would be so impractical: I just got a new job, have student loan payments, etc. The lights in the room dimmed for a second. My interpretation of this was that God wanted me to stop my negativity.

A week later, I had a dream about Rwanda. In my dream I was on the way to the house I would be living in. Along the way I encountered exotic looking *huge* lizards—everyone kept telling me to watch out for their heads (which was odd to me). Then while traveling through the country (by foot) to get to my house, I had to sleep in an open field. I was terrified of large bugs and lions. I sought comfort and guidance from the women in the group that was escorting me. As I have come further along this journey, I have begun to see these are symbolic for the obstacles I will need to overcome to get to Rwanda.

Three nights later I had a dream. I saw the face of Debby Thomas (a missionary in Rwanda with Evangelical Friends Missions). She was saying something to me, but I woke myself up as I wasn't ready to listen. Two nights after that, I had a dream that a lady was talking to a group about missions. She had encyclopedias about different countries and I asked to read one on Rwanda. In my dream I heard God say "I need you to go." I think I woke myself up at this point, still not ready to listen!

I decided, much as two-year-old might, to put my fingers in my ears and pretend I couldn't hear anything. It was full on *resistance*. Why would I want to leave my family and friends, my job—life as I knew it? Was I strong enough to move across the world? What about finances? What about...what about what about? My head was filled with so many questions.

So God gave me space. Three months of space! Looking back now I see I needed that time to be prepared to accept this call and for it to be seasoned within me. Would it have been a lot easier to say yes right then, right there? Of course! I am only human and I thank God for being patient with me.

In June, I was in Nebraska at Great Plains Yearly Meeting having a good old time worshipping and fellowshiping. While we sang the hymn "Here I Am Lord," God gave a little nudge to remind me of what he was calling me to do. I don't remember having much of a reaction to that moment. I think I was still trying to absorb that the calling had *resurfaced*.

When I returned from Nebraska, I began talking to a few people from my church and let it be known I was ready for a clearness committee for discernment to help reach clarity, in this instance, on where God is leading.

I met with my clearness committee, and after meeting for over an hour they felt released that I should submit my application to Evangelical Friends Missions for the two-year teaching position to Rwanda. Since that time it has been a whirlwind of paperwork, phone calls, an interview with the person who just returned from this position, some testing...and on September 5th I was accepted! I am so very humbled to have received this calling and I pray daily to be able to live up to what God is calling me to do.

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